

From: David Balts
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/11/02 7:57pm
Subject: my opinion

Dear Justice Department,

I just heard of the denial of acceptance of the proposed Microsoft settlement. While I can understand the concerns put forth by the companies that object to it, I feel it was a settlement that helped most concerned.

While no one, me included, wants to see any company get away with overcharging customers, I also see a lot of good in the settlement. It would benefit the neediest of schools while still leaving Microsoft a viable intact company.

Unfortunately there are, and always will be, people that won't be happy until Microsoft is broken down and crushed into the dirt. And then I wonder if they would still even be happy. They seem to be only looking for someone to tear apart their competition so they can thrive. A view I'm sure they wouldn't have had they become the software of choice. While competition is good, I believe these companies and individuals only want to gain ground at Microsoft's expense.

Believe me, as someone who was around using computers through times when there was no major player or standards I can remember that it was no fun. No one's software, or even information, could be shared with anyone else without great pains and lots of problems. We all cried out for some kind of standard. I, for one, was glad to finally see a standard spread through the industry. Unfortunately for those whose standard wasn't chosen, it was Microsoft that rose to the top.

While most Microsoft products are hardly perfect, (and who's are?) they do allow many different people running many different programs to communicate and share data together. I would NEVER want to go back to the days of everyone doing their own thing with no standards available.

This has become a case of the best product available becoming the most widely used. But to some it has just become a 'tear down and rip apart Microsoft at any cost' situation. And its funny how those that weren't chosen as the majority standard tend to be yelling the loudest. It was just a clear case of the public choosing the best that was available at the time and using it. Now instead of developing something that can compete or even win out over any Microsoft product, all the competition wants to do is yell foul and hope the justice department eliminates or severely restricts their competition.

Believe me, the American people are smart. If they see something else

developed that will do what they want done better than they are able to do it now, they will choose that product and use it. No matter what Microsoft or anyone else tries to do. Don't diminish the peoples ability.

This situation reminds me of the break-up of the telephone system. While looking good on paper, trying to give other companies a chance and the consumer more choices and thus lower costs, it has done nothing but the opposite. We are all paying more and most people throw their hand up in disgust when it comes to figuring out what's best. And some companies don't even wait for the consumer to decide. They just grab all the new customers they can any way possible and the consumer usually ends up frustrated and paying in the end. Plus the system has never worked together as well as it used to.

I realize these situations can be very different. But in some ways they can be very similar.

Please keep the consumer in mind when you make your decisions, and not the desires and demands of those too involved to decide effectively. Most of Microsoft's competitors now feel that if they complain loud enough someone will finally listen and rule in their favor. While I'm not advocating letting Microsoft off Scott-free, I do feel both the good Microsoft has brought the consumer must be considered along with the bad.

I use Microsoft products, along with other brands, and chose each because I felt they did what I needed to have done the most effectively. And I did this ONLY after looking at everything available. Some companies don't like it because Microsoft still offers some of the best products available. If other companies develop better software I, and the American public, are smart enough to choose what's best for our needs. That's the way this great country works.

We don't need someone to make our decisions for us, especially the Microsoft competitors that seem to be complaining the loudest.

Thank-You.

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